



Healthy Eating/Food Allergens Policy.

Nursery has a strict 'no nut/sesame seed' policy. This means that sesame seeds and nuts and their derivatives, are not permitted due to children potentially being identified as having serious allergies to these food products. This includes hummus, some chocolate spreads, nut oils and nutty breads.

This policy is reviewed constantly as we regularly consult with parents to ensure that our records of all the dietary needs of those children currently attending, including any allergies are up-to-date.

We regard snack and all mealtimes as an important part of the day. For young children snack times are an important opportunity to interact with others, encouraging good communication skills, language development and awareness of healthy eating habits. We consider that it is important for all children to be sitting together and accessing the same foods, (subject to dietary requirements), and if any parent has a difficulty in paying for the food element of their invoice, then this should be discussed with the manager on an individual basis.

Before a child begins attending nursery, we find out any special dietary needs and allergies. Information is recorded in the registration documents and relevant information will be displayed in the meals area and kitchen. Staff have additional prompts in place to alert them to any child with an allergy or a special requirement such as a red dot on their name card and placemat.

For each child's dietary needs to be met, we will ensure that: -

- Information will be recorded about each child in their registration documents and any specific dietary needs or allergies will be relayed to all staff and displayed as previously described.**
- Regular consultation with parents will ensure that records of their child's dietary needs, including any allergies, are up-to-date.**
- Snacks are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings. Snacks are planned in advance and the food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced. Menus and recipes are available to parents/carers. Less healthy snacks may be offered to co-ordinate a theme or for a special occasion, these are opportunities for discussion times.**
- Children's medical, religious and personal dietary requirements are respected, and different foods and cultures are celebrated and greeted positively regardless of personal likes or dislikes.**
- Children are encouraged to eat healthily.**
- Semi-skimmed, organic, pasteurised milk or as an alternative, water is served with morning snack. Alternative milks to dairy are available. We offer milk after tea if they children would like some.**
- Snacks from other cultures are provided to introduce children to foods which may be unfamiliar to them.**
- Meal and snack times will be organised so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.**
- Meal and snack times are used to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.**

- Children will have access to fresh drinking water from their water beakers. They are encouraged to help themselves and put their beaker back on the tray when they have finished each time. **It is important that these drinking bottles are named and that they contain water only. Children may be allergic to anything, and therefore nursery has to be sure of what foods and drinks are coming into the building. Juices drunk in between meals increase the risk of dental caries considerably and thinking ahead for 'school readiness', water is the only option in school, so please adhere to our policy for the health and safety of ALL children.**
- Food is celebrated and seen as an important part of culture and tradition.
- All staff take an accredited CIEH Food Hygiene course every three years.
- A range of teaching methods and resources will be used to promote healthy eating and discuss the need for a balanced diet, with regard to the 'food triangle'.
- Staff are encouraged to be good role models for healthy eating.

Lunches

- Nursery lunches are provided for children staying from 12noon to 2pm – there is a small additional charge for lunches as government funding does not cover the cost. Please speak with the manager if you are unable to cover the cost and we will try to come to an amicable solution.
- Healthy cooked meals are available with a healthy breakfast, lunch and a pudding and a substantial tea as well as snacks during the day and drinks.
- Crudités are available at all mealtimes as alternatives.

We use organic milk, and free-range eggs as well as British butter and source outdoor reared meat from a local butcher.

Parents are welcome to join their child for lunch on special occasions subject to any pandemic guidelines.

Birthday treats may be brought in for your child at nursery as a more expensive fruit or snack option, such as strawberries, starfruit, cherries etc.

We do not allow lunch boxes to be brought into our nursery due to the risk of cross-contamination and possible severe allergic reactions. We frequently have many children and some staff with various serious food allergies – some to Epi-pen level. There fore we need to ensure all our food is prepared, cooked and served with all of our processes in place for .everyone's safety.

July 2026

To be reviewed on or before July 2027

Catkins Child Care Sussex Ltd.